



# FloorPrep

Legislative Digest

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

J.C. Watts, Jr.  
Chairman  
4th District, Oklahoma

*House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business*

*Anticipated Floor Action:*

**H.R. 800—Education Flexibility Partnership Act (Conference Report)**

**H.R. 1184—Earthquake Hazards Reduction Authorization Act**



## **H.R. 800—Education Flexibility Partnership Act (Conference Report)**

**Floor Situation:** The House is scheduled to consider the conference report to H.R. 800 as its first order of business today. Conference reports are privileged and may be considered any time three days after they are filed. They are debatable for one hour, may not be amended, and are subject to one motion to recommit. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted a rule waiving all points of order against the conference report and its consideration.

**Summary:** H.R. 800 expands to all 50 states the “Ed-Flex” demonstration program, which is currently limited to 12 states. The Ed-Flex program, created in 1994 under the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (*P.L. 103-227*), gives states, in exchange for increased accountability for results, the authority to waive certain federal statutory and regulatory requirements. The bill makes the Ed-Flex demonstration a nationwide, stand-alone program, and thus does not amend the Goals 2000 Act. To qualify for Ed-Flex waivers, states must (1) have approved challenging educational content standards and performance measures, in accordance with Title I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act; and (2) hold local educational agencies (LEAs) accountable for meeting the educational goals submitted in their applications for waivers. In addition, states must waive their own education regulations. The waiver authority will not apply to federal health, safety, or civil rights rules—nor will it apply to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The House passed H.R. 800 by a vote of 330-90 on March 11, 1999. The Senate passed its version of the bill by a vote of 98-1 the same day.

**Views:** The Republican leadership supports passage of the bill. An official Clinton Administration view was unavailable at press time. However, the administration officially supported the House-passed bill and has unofficially indicated support for the conference report.

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #10, Pt. II, April 19, 1999.



## **H.R. 1184—Earthquake Hazards Reduction Authorization Act**

**Floor Situation:** The House is scheduled to consider H.R. 1184 after it completes consideration of the conference report to H.R. 800. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted an open rule that provides one hour of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Science Committee. The rule waives House rules requiring that committee reports be available three days before consideration. It makes in order a committee amendment in the nature of a substitute as base text. In addition, the rule accords priority in recognition to members who have their amendments pre-printed in the *Congressional Record*. The chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone votes and reduce the voting time on a postponed vote to five minutes, so long as it follows a regular 15-minute vote. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

**Summary:** H.R. 1184 authorizes \$202 million for FYs 2000-2001 for the National Earthquake Hazards Reductions Program (NEHRP), which is led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and also involves the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). In addition, the bill authorizes \$253 million for FYs 2000-2004 for the USGS to expand seismic research and monitoring. It requires FEMA to report to Congress describing elements of the NEHRP that address the needs of at-risk populations such as the elderly, the disabled, and non-English speakers. The bill authorizes the USGS director to establish an advisory committee to provide the agency with scientific advice regarding its participation in the NEHRP. Finally, the measure authorizes \$82 million for FYs 2000-2004 for the NSF to establish a Network for Engineering Simulations of Earthquakes, which will interconnect earthquake engineering centers and upgrade and expand major earthquake testing facilities. NEHRP was last authorized on October 1, 1997; its authorization expires at the end of FY 1999.

CBO estimates that enactment will result in additional discretionary outlays of \$477 million over the FY 2000-2004 period, assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts. The bill does not affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply. The measure was introduced by Mr. Smith (MI) and was reported by the Science Committee by voice vote on March 25, 1999.

**Views:** The Republican leadership supports passage of the bill. An official Clinton Administration view was unavailable at press time.

**Amendments:** At press time, the *Legislative Digest* was unaware of any amendments to H.R. 1184.

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #10, April 16, 1999.

